

**Administering and Scoring ELPA Initial Screening
Questions and Answers
Wayne RESA Teleconference—August 31, 2006**

1. What is the ELPA Initial Screening?

The ELPA Initial Screening was developed to assist schools in determining eligibility for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services for new ELLs (English language learners) entering Michigan schools in the fall.

Since the fall version is shorter, there are three proficiency levels—basic, intermediate, and proficient—all linked to the proficiency levels on the spring 2006 ELPA (English Language Proficiency Assessment). The intermediate level on the ELPA Initial Screening encompasses the high- and low-intermediate levels from spring.

2. Why are we giving ELPA?

The implementation of the ELPA is federally mandated as part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. The content is based on Michigan's ELP standards, offering assessment in the four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing with individual student reports that also include comprehension. The ELPA is used for the official reporting of Title III annual performance for the State of Michigan.

3. Does the ELPA Initial Screening replace next spring's assessment?

No, the ELPA Initial Screening does not replace the spring ELPA. The spring ELPA is the annual assessment that is to be given to all students who are enrolled in grades K-12 and are eligible for LEP services. The fall ELPA Initial Screening helps ensure appropriate instructional placement of ELLs.

4. Who is assessed?

ELL students who are new to your district or who did not participate in the spring 2006 ELPA should be assessed using the ELPA Initial Screening this fall.

5. How do we find out if a student who is new to our district took the ELPA last spring? How do we get the results?

Staff members who have been designated as ELPA Screener Users can log onto the secure OEAA Web site and perform a search for that student. The student's name will be displayed as a link, which can then be clicked on to determine all assessments that have been administered to the student. The spring ELPA test and a (t) will be shown for students who have a score for last spring.

Although scores and results from the spring ELPA will still remain confidential, the student record search will show the school and district where the spring ELPA test was taken. A link to the state's master listing of schools and districts at the bottom of the page will show an administrative contact name and telephone number for the school district that administered the spring ELPA to a particular student.

6. How do staff—especially from ISDs—get assigned as ELPA screener users?

The ELPA Screener User role is new and unique. The ELPA Screener User has access only to ELPA sections of the OEAA Secure Website. This includes permission to register students for an ELPA Initial Screening; to enter data for Parts A and B; and to print reports. The Screener User can enter a student name or Unique Identifying Code (UIC) to find out if ELPA was administered to the student last spring (which is indicated as a (t) after the student name for the spring cycle).

ISD staff can be assigned as an ELPA Screener Users for this assessment by contacting the districts that are served. In Michigan, school districts have primary responsibility for student assessment data. With assessment programs such as ELPA, the districts provide user access to ISD staff—on an individual basis—to historical and current ELPA scores.

Direct access to a district's ELPA scores will enable ISD staff to research assessment information for students who are eligible for Title III services and to manage program services for these students, where appropriate. Access to ELPA records is particularly important to ISD staff who are responsible for district Title III information as part of a consortium.

7. Are foreign exchange students eligible for the ELPA if they meet the criteria of the federal government?

Yes.

8. Must we test grade 12 foreign exchange students since they are with us for this school year only?

Foreign exchange students are to be assessed with ELPA if they are eligible for services (and if districts include them in the state aid membership count in a grade level when the state assessments are administered).

9. My district uses the Woodcock-Muñoz test to determine English proficiency. Why should I use the ELPA Initial Screening?

The ELPA assessments are designed to meet federal requirements for ELP assessments, including alignment with Michigan standards of English language proficiency reporting requirements. The scale score of the ELPA Initial Screening is aligned with the scale scores of last spring's ELPA, providing consistent scores.

Use of the ELPA Initial Screening is required for reporting an English language proficiency score for ELLs who have “recently arrived” in a U S public school. On September 13, the U.S. Department of Education modified rules for these recently arrived students.

10. Is the ELPA Initial Screening mandatory?

This is a transitional year. The ELPA Initial Screening is recommended, but mandatory only for schools and districts who wish to excuse “recently arrived” students from taking the English Language Arts portion of the MEAP this fall. This is a one-time exemption that is offered to English language learners who have been enrolled in a U.S. public school for 12 months or less.

If an ELPA is administered to students, they can be counted as participating in the ELA portion of MEAP, provided that the results of the ELPA are on file, listing a U.S. entry date

of 12 months or less in section 5 of the demographic page. This field is also available on the OEAA Secure site as part of Tested Roster.

Submission of special forms to excuse these students from the ELA portion of MEAP is no longer required. The mathematics, science and social studies portions of the MEAP are to be administered to “recently arrived” students using accommodations as needed. A list of accommodations for ELLs is provided in MEAP administration manuals.

11. Will the ELPA score be used in place of the MEAP score?

The ELPA score can only be used in place of the MEAP English language arts (ELA) score for “recently arrived” students. These are ELLs who have been in a United States public school for one school year or less, at the time of the MEAP assessments. For example, if an ELL meets this criterion at the time of MEAP in fall 2006, the ELPA score can be used as a substitute for ELA.

These students still need to take the MEAP mathematics and science or social studies assessments with the appropriate accommodations. The date listed in section 5 of the ELPA demographic pages from spring and fall 2006 will be used to determine eligibility.

12. Why was kindergarten through second grade students tested on ELPA last spring when there is no MEAP at these grades?

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires an annual assessment of all students enrolled in grades K-12 who are eligible for LEP services, regardless of funding or current program participation.

13. We are supposed to screen the students to determine whether they can opt out of the ELA section of MEAP. MEAP is still in October, correct?

The fall MEAP cycle for grades 3-8 begins October 9. See question 4, **“Is the ELPA Initial Screening mandatory?”** for guidelines regarding the use of ELPA for “recently arrived” students.

14. If our ELLs took the ELPA test last spring, do they still need to take the MEAP?

ELLs are to participate in both assessment systems. MEAP and ELPA are considered to be separate—or different assessment requirements—as described in the No Child Left Behind legislation. MEAP is the assessment system that the State of Michigan uses to measure student progress with Michigan content standards in mathematics, English language arts, and science.

ELPA is the assessment system that the State of Michigan has developed to measure student progress with learning English and is based on the English language proficiency standards. In past years, schools and districts chose from six off-the-shelf English language proficiency assessments and student scores were converted to a common set proficiency scores. These scores were then used for Title III reporting. Once implemented, the results from the ELPA will be used for Title III reporting.

The only exception is a recently arrived ELL. For more information regarding these students, please see the answer to question 11.

15. Will the ELPA screener be used throughout the year, or only during the testing window of early September to October 4?

The first phase of the ELPA Initial Screening is to be completed October 4. Returning all Part A and B completed materials to the district for return to OEAA on October 6 is critical. There is a requirement to collect and review scores for all Phase I items, including Part B forms by October 10.

Unused Part A materials may be kept for new students entering schools after October 4. A word of caution, however: like the fall MEAP, the content of the ELPA Initial Screening for fall is based on content from the previous school year. Thus, the proficiency measure for students is based on where they would have scored if they had taken the ELPA last spring.

Starting December 1, it is recommended that ELPA Initial Screening levels should be given to students according to the following:

Level	Grade Level(s)
I	K (all four sections)
II	1-2
III	3-5
IV	6-8
V	9-12

All students taking the ELPA Initial Screening will still need to participate in the annual ELPA for spring 2007.

16. How will we receive initial screening materials for new students who arrive at school after October 6?

Supplemental orders for the first phase of ELPA Initial Screening are being disseminated by OEAA staff. Some unused Part A materials may be kept for new students entering schools after that time, but these materials have to be kept securely within the school or district, just as with any other assessment. For further information, please refer to the answer for question 15, above.

17. When will Administrator Manuals be sent out?

The Administration manuals for the ELPA Initial Screening were distributed as part of the original shipments from Harcourt Assessment, Inc. These were shipped on September 6-7.

Beginning September 8, supplemental orders were filled by the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA). In addition, electronic versions of the manuals have been placed on the OEAA secure web site; these can be found at the bottom of the main Web page for the ELPA Initial Screening (log in first through <http://www.michigan.gov/elpa>). To order additional administrator manuals for ELPA Initial Screening, contact the OEAA at (877) 560-TEST (8378).

18. Do we read the answers to the students on the listening section?

This fall, the test questions (item stems) and answer choices may be read out loud to all students taking the ELPA Initial Screening. The Listening CDs and audiotapes automatically include the reading of all textual answer choices.

19. Can we include the Home Language Survey questions in an enrollment form or does it need to be a separate document?

Many school districts do include the Home Language Survey questions as part of the enrollment form. Title III staff has developed a model for implementing the survey. It is available at the Michigan Department of Education Web site:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Home_language_survey_52531_7.dot

To obtain ELPA scores for a student who took the ELPA in another district, please refer to the answer for question 6, above.

20. Is the ELPA Initial Screening site available now?

Information and functions related to the ELPA Initial Screening on the secure OEAA Web site became available on Friday, September 8. The scoring and reporting features were made available on Tuesday, September 12.

21. What is the final date to enter the test data into the OEAA website? Is it October 4?

The closing date of the Phase 1 cycle is October 4. We will keep the site open until October 6 for those districts who plan to hand deliver materials to OEAA here in Lansing on Friday.

The site will remain open for the scoring and reporting of Part A for new students who arrive after October 4, 2006.

22. Do we do Part B?

Yes. Schools and districts should administer all of the Part B forms received in the original shipment, which included a statewide total of 400 assessments for each Part B Form.

It is very important that all Part B forms are administered to students as the second part of the screener for new students. If you have large numbers of new students with little or no language background, you may opt to give the Part B form to ELL students who participated in the ELPA last spring.

Good information about all Part B items is required before inclusion on an operational test. We have determined that 400 responses are statistically needed for this process.

Please note: It is expected that all Part B forms will be completed and returned by October 6; Part B writing forms will be collected from participating districts on October 4 so that hand-scoring may be completed on October 6-7.

23. Why do we need to complete the demographic page if we are entering the information onto the secure site?

We need the name of the student, teacher and school in case of research that requires referring to the actual document. A label is very helpful for this process. Some of the other information being gathered, such as language background or accommodation, is not gathered elsewhere. These data are important reporting elements.

24. My district ordered ELPA Initial Screening Level I assessments for teachers in the elementary school, but we did not see a K assessment. Why not?

The K assessment for the ELPA Initial Screening is optional. As a pilot, teachers of Kindergarten ELLs may administer the Listening and Speaking sections of Level I to their students. For the kindergarten level of the ELPA Initial Screening, the Individual Student Report shows a predicted proficiency level that is based only on the oral language sections of the assessment.

25. Will results impact AYP?

Not directly at this time. However, the performance of ELLs on MEAP, as a subgroup, is critical in helping a school or district make AYP. As students make progress in learning English, it is expected that the number of ELLs who score at the proficient level in MEAP will increase.

26. What effects are there on AYP at the school level?

ELPA tracks academic progress with learning important English skills. The results are used for Michigan's Title III Annual Performance Report. English language learners are also assessed with all Title I content-based assessments (MEAP). Again, see the response to question 4, above, for exemption of ELLs on the ELA portion of the MEAP.

27. What is the AYP expectation for ELLs per year?

The assessment performance expectations for ELLs are tied to the Title III reporting for the State of Michigan. The assessment results are reported in terms of an individual student's growth or gains from one year to another and the average gains for Title III programs.

28. Were any questions changed through the teacher meetings in Lansing in July?

Part A is composed of questions that were included in last spring's ELPA. This enables us to link the results to last spring's performance levels.

Part B includes new items that were developed or modified by Michigan teachers who were involved in the item development process during the months of June and July.

29. In the fall ELPA Initial Screening, will the directions in the Speaking section still say, "Read and finish the sentence"? Last spring, we found that having the students read was a distraction, especially for younger students. If new students cannot read English yet, this may be even more distracting.

Part A speaking items are the same as spring 2006, in order to allow the linking of the screening results to the performance levels from last spring. The phrase "Read and finish the sentence" will still be included on these items.

Part B speaking forms contain new formats that may be introduced in the spring 2007 assessment, depending on this fall's results. We hope that students will be less distracted and more able to show us their best performance on these new items.

30. Will districts receive multiple forms for both Part A and Part B or only one form?

There is one form of Part A. Part B has a number of forms. The Part B forms, which were included as part of the original shipments to districts, were distributed in a scientific manner to ensure appropriate demographic representation for the sampling of each form.

Each district that is assigned to administer a part B form will only have one form for each student. A Part B form focuses on only one or two language domains and contains 10-14 items.

31. Will the State work to change SRSD recording from levels 1A - 5 to Basic/Intermediate/Proficient?

We will request that SRSD update the assessment fields to reflect ELPA reporting.

32. Why are you using three levels of English proficiency to score students for the ELPA Initial Screening and four levels for ELPA?

The spring 2006 ELPA had sufficient length to support four levels. The ELPA Initial Screening is shorter and is designed to assist districts with initial placement, which is to take place within the first 10 school days after enrollment.

The proficient and basic levels of the initial screener correspond to the proficient levels from last spring. The Intermediate level on the ELPA Initial Screening encompasses both the High- and Low-Intermediate levels on last spring's ELPA.

33. How will the MDE provide levels 1A-5?

The ELPA will provide at least the three levels of proficiency—basic, intermediate, and proficient—that are required by federal guidelines. Scale scores will also be reported using a common scale across grade levels, providing schools and districts information about student performance within—and across—proficiency levels.

34. Will the ELPA spring and fall assessments replace the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey for determining eligibility and language acquisition progress?

The ELPA is used as the official State of Michigan assessment for Title III annual reporting purposes. The ELPA Initial Screening has been designed as a shorter measure that is consistent with the spring ELPA results and can be used for new students at other times in the year.

35. For regular MEAP testing we were just sent a memo saying not to put demographic info in the database. The information would be taken from the fall SRSD, is this the same for the ELPA testing?

The fall SRSD data will not be available at the time of testing. However, the district may use data systems that identify new students as a pre-load for the ELPA Screener cycle, allowing test administrators to add only raw scores and other data after the assessments are completed.

36. Why is the screening limited to a window? New students can come in at anytime. What do we do to assess them?

Districts may use Part A of the ELPA Initial Screening for new students. Please see question 15 for additional information.

37. Are there normed percentiles we can use to qualify students for Sec. 41 funding (both on ELPA Spring 06 and Fall 06)?

By legislation, the ELPA is a standards-based assessment. As such, results are reported as scaled scores and proficiency levels.

38. What about preschoolers? Is there any formal assessment?

Not at this time. The federal requirements specify an annual assessment for grades K-12. Providing a consistent screening assessment for incoming K-12 students at other times of the year is also important.

This fall, there are a number of districts desiring to use the ELPA Initial Screening as an assessment for incoming K students. If the interest for an assessment at the pre-K to entering K levels is significant, we will explore the feasibility of extending the availability of English language proficiency assessments for pre-K levels.

39. Will we be testing students that are in special education and are also eligible for LEP services?

Yes, All students who are eligible for Title III services—whether or not they are currently receiving those services—need to be assessed. This includes students with disabilities and Section 504 students.

For these students, accommodations that are customarily used during classroom activities may be considered for use during the administration of the ELPA. These accommodations are designed to assist students with disabilities in taking ELPA. Accommodations for ELPA is referenced in the Manual for Administering and Scoring the ELPA Initial Screening.

40. Does the Department offer training to develop skilled test administrators?

We have provided training for administration both in a teleconference format and in a face-to-face format at regional sites. We invite interested educators in assisting with the training of test administrators throughout the state.

41. What do we do if a student is new to our district but may have taken the ELPA in the spring?

You can determine whether the student has taken ELPA by linking to spring 2006 from the ELPA screener cycle on the OEAA Secure Site. For more information, please see the answer to question 5, above.

42. I heard that a colleague of mine helped the OEAA write items for the ELPA last summer. Can I participate, too?

Certainly. We are looking for educators who work with ELLs at any level for item writing committees, bias review committees, content review committees, and for an upcoming Writing scoring committee.

If you would like to be considered as a candidate, please contact Phil Chase, ELPA Specialist, by phone at (517) 335-3967, or by e-mail at chasep2@michigan.gov.